

## What criminal justice professionals need to know about autism

- > They are often very vulnerable and can be easily influenced.
- > They may be the unwitting accomplice in crimes.
- > They may not respond appropriately when questioned as they may have difficulty in understanding what people are saying.
- > They may become extremely agitated and find it difficult to modulate their voice.
- > Their anxiety may stop them processing information and following instructions.
- > They may not be able to make eye-contact.
- > They may be sensitive to sound, touch or smell.

If you or someone you know would like a card, request an application form by:

calling the NAS North East office: 0191 568073

emailing your request to: [northeast@nas.org.uk](mailto:northeast@nas.org.uk)

or writing to us at:

The National Autistic Society  
Room 10 North Sands Business Centre  
Liberty Way  
Sunderland  
SR6 0QA

Please note that we do require proof of a diagnosis on the autism spectrum before we can issue a card. This will be returned to you with your card.

Proof of a diagnosis can be a copy of any of these documents:

- > diagnosis letter
- > Statement of Special Educational Needs
- > letter from a professional eg GP/social worker
- > medical report or assessment

**Although the cards are free, there is a £1.00 fee for any replacement cards.**



The National Autistic Society is a company limited by guarantee registered in England (No.1205298) and a charity registered in England and Wales (269425) and in Scotland (SC039427), registered office 393 City Road, London, EC1V 1NG

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Cards and resources adapted with kind permission from Autism Anglia, Glasgow Autism Resource centre, Strathclyde Police and Autism West Midlands and developed in partnership with Durham Constabulary.



## Autism alert card

Produced in partnership with  
Durham Constabulary



If you or a person you know has been diagnosed as having a condition on the autism spectrum you can apply for this **FREE** alert card.

Your autism charity

## Autism alert card

### Do you or a person you know have autism (including Asperger syndrome)?

If so, you may have already been in a position where you have had to explain the nature of autism and its associated behaviours to someone you don't know.

Our credit card sized **autism alert card** can be carried at all times and can be shown if you find yourself in a situation where you cannot easily give an explanation about the condition.

The card is supported by Durham Constabulary and it will help them and emergency services to identify that they are dealing with someone who has autism.

We are delighted that we can offer this card free of charge.

The card gives some information about the condition, some simple advice, and space for the cardholder's name and two emergency contact details.

#### *I have an autism spectrum disorder*

This means:

- > I have social communication difficulties
- > I am likely to be extremely anxious in unfamiliar situations
- > my behaviour may appear strange or threatening
- > I will need the support of an appropriate adult / intermediary.

My name is ..... Card no. ....

Please contact ..... Tel .....

Please contact ..... Tel .....

In addition to the card, The National Autistic Society in Durham is providing information, advice and training to the Police and other emergency services. This will raise awareness and understanding of autism and give practical advice for real-life situations.

### What is autism?

One person in 100 has autism. It is a lifelong developmental condition that affects how a person communicates with, and relates to, other people. It is also a spectrum condition which means that, while all people with autism share certain difficulties, their condition will affect them in different ways.

Asperger syndrome is a form of autism. Many people with Asperger syndrome are of average or above average intelligence.

Some people with autism experience over- or under- sensitivity to sounds, touch, taste, smells, light or colours.

People with autism often become extremely anxious in unexpected or unfamiliar situations. Anyone with autism should have access to an appropriate adult or intermediary when in contact with the police or emergency services.

**This card will alert the police and emergency services that the person carrying the card has a condition that may require special attention.**

### Why do emergency services need to know about autism?

People with autism can become extremely anxious and their behaviour may appear unusual or threatening to people who don't understand the condition. The sound of sirens, being touched or the smell of medications, etc may add to their anxiety. They may find it difficult to follow instructions. They often react differently to pain and may be in great pain without showing any outward signs.

**ATTENTION!**  
**POLICE / EMERGENCY SERVICES**  
*I have an autism spectrum disorder*  
turn over for more information

Supported by  
Durham  
Constabulary

The National  
Autistic Society

Produced by  
The National Autistic Society,  
Helpline: 0845 070 4004  
(Monday-Friday 10am-4pm)  
[www.autism.org.uk/cjp](http://www.autism.org.uk/cjp)  
Registered Charity No 1205298.